

Regulatory Language

Section 126, Title 14, CCR, is added to read:

126. Commercial Take of Tanner Crab.

(a) Permit Required for Take and Possession Using Trap Gear. Any vessel using traps to take, possess aboard a vessel, or land Tanner crab (*Chionoecetes spp.*) for commercial purposes shall have a valid Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit. Tanner crab taken incidentally in other trap fisheries may not be possessed and must be immediately returned to the water unless the vessel is issued a Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit. A Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit is not required to incidentally take, possess or land Tanner crab with gear other than trap gear. For purposes of this Section, the term "Tanner crab" includes all species of the genus *Chionoecetes*.

(1) Permit Issuance Provisions.

(A) An applicant is eligible to purchase a Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit for placement on a vessel if the following conditions are met:

(1) The vessel must be issued a valid commercial boat registration pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 7881.

(2) The applicant must hold a valid commercial fishing license issued pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 7850.

(3) The applicant must submit a Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit application form DFG XXX (X/05), which is incorporated by reference herein, and the permit fee specified in subsection (a)(2).

(B) There are no deadlines or late fees for purchase of a Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit. The sale of Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permits is not restricted and therefore permits are not subject to renewal requirements.

(2) Permit Fee. The Department shall charge a fee of \$10,000 for a Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit that is valid from April 1 through March 31.

(3) Other Permits Required.

(A) Any person who operates or assists on any vessel for purposes of taking, transporting or landing Tanner crab under authority of a Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit shall possess a valid commercial fishing license issued pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 7850, unless expressly exempted by that Section.

(B) Any person operating under authority of Fish and Game Code Section 7850 who operates or assists on any vessel when trap gear is aboard for purposes of taking, transporting or landing Tanner crab under authority of a Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit shall also possess a valid General Trap Permit issued pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 9001.

(4) Tanner Crab Trap Construction Requirements, Specifications, and Limits.

(A) State Trapping Requirements. As a condition of this permit, Tanner crab traps and commercial Tanner crab trap fishing activities are subject to statutes and regulations that define and specify the following general trap requirements: trap logbooks and submission requirements, trap destruction devices, disturbing traps of another, trap servicing intervals not to exceed 96 hours, trap marker

buoys, and other trap and buoy identification requirements. These statutes and regulations are defined in Fish and Game Code sections 9001, 9002, 9003, 9004, 9005, 9006, 9007, and 9008, and sections 180, 180.2, 180.5, and 190, Title 14, CCR.

(B) Trap Construction and Dimensional Requirements.

1. Escape Ports. Every Tanner crab trap shall have at least three openings of at least 4.5 inches in diameter in the side or upper panels of the trap to allow for escapement of undersized crab. The 4.5-inch measurement of the opening shall be taken at its smallest inside diameter. The openings may be constructed with a rigid opening such as a ring or as part of a mesh panel. At the time of measurement, the trap shall be set upright as if it were in use. If the opening is non-rigid or contained within pliable mesh, the smallest inside diameter measurement shall be taken so that a rigid cylindrical measuring device 4.5 inches in its outside diameter and at least three inches in length shall be able to pass easily through the opening.

2. Trap Dimensional Requirements. Tanner crab traps must not be more than 10 feet long and not more than 10 feet wide and not more than 42 inches high, as measured by the greatest distance in each dimension.

(C) Trap Destruction Devices.

Traps utilized under authority of a Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit must contain a trap destruction device meeting the requirements for Tanner crab traps specified in Section 180.2, Title 14, CCR.

(D) Prohibition on Pop-Ups. Timed buoy release mechanisms capable of submerging a buoy attached to a trap, commonly known as “pop-ups,” shall not be used on buoy lines attached to Tanner crab traps, and shall not be possessed by any commercial vessel while taking, attempting to take, or possessing Tanner crabs.

(E) Depth Requirement. Tanner crab traps shall only be placed or otherwise used in water depths greater than 300 fathoms.

(F) Vessel Buoy Marking Requirement. In addition to the trap and buoy marking requirements specified in Fish and Game Code section 9006 and 9007, every string of traps shall be marked with a buoy on each end of the string that is marked with the vessel’s commercial boat registration number issued by the department pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 7881. A vessel fishing under authority of a Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit may only take, possess aboard a vessel, transport, deliver, or land Tanner crab from traps marked with the vessel’s own registration number. The vessel’s registration number on each buoy shall be preceded by the letters “TC.” The numbers and letters shall be in a color which contrasts with the color of the buoy. A line thickness no less than 1/8 inch shall be used to create letters and numbers which shall be no less than two (2) inches in height and no less than one (1) inch in greatest width. The permit holder shall maintain the buoys so that the registration numbers and the letters “TC” are legible and easily determined.

(G) Disturbing Traps Prohibited. It is unlawful to willfully or recklessly disturb, move or damage any trap or attachment thereof that belongs to another owner and that is marked with a vessel registration number and the letters “TC.”

However, a person aboard a permitted vessel may pull or raise a trap marked with a buoy bearing a vessel registration number and the letters "TC" other than his own, but must have written permission in his or her immediate possession from the permittee whose vessel registration number is marked on the buoy. This subsection does not apply to employees of the department while engaged in the performance of official duties. Employees of the department may disclose the name, address, and registration number of Tanner Crab Trap Vessel permittees to representatives of public safety agencies to assist in the return of traps and attachments to their proper owners. This subsection does not create any duty on any state or local agency to remove or move a trap, line, or buoy that may endanger the public safety and does not create any liability to Part 2 (commencing with Section 814) of Division 3.6 of Title 1 of the Government Code.

(H) Trap and String Limits. No more than 480 traps may be submerged or otherwise used per permitted vessel. Not more than six strings with not more than 80 traps per string shall be submerged or otherwise used. All traps must be fished on a string of traps. For purposes of this Section, "string" means individual traps that are connected by line or other means.

(5) Processing at Sea. Vessels may process crabs at sea and land them in a condition other than whole pursuant to the requirements of this Section.

(A) For purposes of this Section, the term "processing" shall not be equated to the term or activity of "Process fish" as defined in Fish and Game Code Section 8031.

(B) If Tanner crab is not landed in the round, the whole-weight conversion factor that shall be applied is 1.61. At the time the landing receipt is completed pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 8043, the processed weight shall be recorded in the "Pounds" section and the converted whole weight, in pounds, shall be recorded in the space marked "Note Pad" on the landing receipt.

(C) For purposes of landing tax payments as required and specified by Fish and Game Code sections 8041 and 8051, for Tanner crab landed in processed condition, tax payments shall be computed and paid based on the converted whole weight.

(6) Cumulative Vessel Trip Limits.

(A) A cumulative trip limit is the total number of pounds of Tanner crab that may be taken and retained, possessed, or landed by a vessel in a two-month period without a limit on the number of landings or trips. The cumulative trip limit per vessel per designated two-month limit period is 250,000 pounds of whole crab. For purposes of calculating catch against a cumulative vessel trip limit, all landings of processed crab shall be converted to the whole-weight equivalent as described in subsection (a)(5)(B).

(B) Cumulative trip limit periods start at 0001 hours local time, end at 2400 hours local time, and are in two month periods as follows:

1. January 1 through the last day of February.
2. March 1-April 30,
3. May 1-June 30,
4. July 1-August 31,

- 5. September 1-October 31,
- 6. November 1-December 31.

(C) All landings made in a vessel's registration number listed on landing receipts submitted to the department pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 8043 count toward the cumulative trip limit for the two month period that corresponds to the date on the receipt. Such receipts must accurately record the weight of Tanner crab landed.

(D) Copies of all landing receipts which document the catch of Tanner crab shall be kept onboard the fishing vessel throughout, and for 15 days following, each period for which cumulative landings by individual vessels are limited.

(E) When the seasonal catch limit defined in subsection (b) is reached and action to close the fishery is taken, cumulative trip limits defined in this subsection become inoperative.

(7) Incidental Landings and Allowances.

(A) No more than five percent of the total possessed or landed catch by weight may be comprised of invertebrates other than Tanner crab. All crab and other invertebrates taken in Tanner crab traps, except for crab of the genus *Cancer* (including but not limited to Dungeness crab and rock crab) may be landed and sold incidentally under authority of a Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit.

(B) All finfish taken in Tanner crab traps, with the exception of sablefish, shall immediately be returned to the water. Sablefish may be landed if authorized pursuant to Federal groundfish regulations.

(C) No invertebrates or finfish taken in Tanner crab traps may be used as bait.

(8) Observer Requirements and Cooperation with Observer Programs.

(A) Each permittee is required to carry an observer onboard to gather biological, fishery and bycatch information during Tanner crab fishery operations according to the specifications defined in this subsection. The permittee shall contract with either a National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)-certified observer provider firm, or a private individual who is certified either as a NMFS observer or as a crab observer by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The Tanner Crab Trap Vessel permittee shall be liable for a violation of any terms or conditions of this subsection.

1. Prior to contracting, the permittee is required to acquire department approval of the selected provider firm or private individual. The department shall review the qualifications of the observer with whom the vessel wishes to contract with, and may reject the individual or firm. Request for department approval shall be directed to the department's Marine Region Regional Manager or his or her designee, and must be sought by phone at (562) 342-7108, and in writing to the department's office at 4665 Lampson Avenue, Suite C, Los Alamitos, CA 90720. Requests for approval must be made at least 60 days prior to the planned commencement of fishing activity. At the time the request is made, the permittee must also notify the department of the anticipated start date of fishing activity.

2. As a condition of the contract, the observer shall collect biological and fishery data according to the department's onboard data collection protocol. The permittee is required to ensure that while aboard, the observer is gathering data at all times when the vessel is engaged in fishing activity. Data collected by the

observer shall include, but is not limited to, information on catch, incidental take, sex ratio, size, weight, discards, vessel position and depth, trap soak time, number of traps set and pulled, observation reports and other documentation. The department's onboard data collection protocol is comparable to federal fishery observer programs.

3. The department will provide all necessary sampling materials, equipment and a computer to the selected provider firm or individual for the observer's use aboard the vessel. The permittee shall ensure that the sampling materials, equipment and computer are returned to the department following completion of the observer's duties. Observer safety equipment needs and safety specifications shall be arranged by the permittee with the selected provider firm or private individual, and shall not be the responsibility of the department.

4. The contract between the permittee and the selected provider firm or private individual shall specify that data collected aboard the vessel shall be the property of the department.

5. The permittee shall ensure that all data collected or reported by the observer shall be delivered to the department office at 4665 Lampson Avenue, Suite C, Los Alamitos, CA 90720 on or before the 10th day of each month following the month to which the observer's records pertain. Observer records that are mailed shall be postmarked on or before the 10th day of each month following the month to which the records pertain.

6. The permittee shall ensure that the data and all reports and documentation are collected by the observer on paper data sheets, entered into a computer provided by the department, and provided to the department in electronic format according to the submission procedures described in this subsection. Paper data sheets used onboard the vessel shall be included with the electronic data submitted to the department.

(B) As a condition of a Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit, the permittee is required to have an observer onboard at the time the vessel's fishing activity commences each fishing season, and during all fishing operations that occur over the sixty consecutive days that follow. A vessel's fishing activity commences at the time that a trap is deployed for purposes of commercially harvesting Tanner crab.

(C) All vessels and persons operating under authority of a Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit are subject to provisions of Section 105.5, Title 14, CCR. The crew must allow personnel designated by the department to board any commercial fishing vessel, conveyance, or other mechanical device used under authority of a Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit, to observe or inspect equipment, procedures, crabs, other invertebrates or fish.

(9) Permit Revocation and Violations.

(A) Pursuant to Fish and Game Code subsection 1052(b), a Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit shall be revoked if the applicant or permittee submits false information for the purposes of obtaining a permit.

(B) Any Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit may be suspended, revoked or cancelled by the commission upon notice by the department of a violation by a permit holder, or any person acting under authority of his or her permit, of Fish and Game Code sections 9001, 9002, 9003, 9004, 9005, 9006, 9007, and 9008.

sections 105.5, 180, 180.2, 180.5, and 190, Title 14, CCR, the regulations of this Section, or other provisions of the Fish and Game Code or regulations of the Fish and Game Commission relating to crabs, traps, and times or areas closed to fishing.

(C) The Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit holder shall be liable for any violations committed by him or her of Fish and Game Code sections 9001, 9002, 9003, 9004, 9005, 9006, 9007, and 9008, sections 105.5, 180, 180.2, 180.5, and 190, Title 14, CCR, the regulations of this Section, or other provisions of the Fish and Game Code or regulations of the Fish and Game Commission relating to crabs, traps, and times or areas closed to fishing. The Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit holder shall also be liable for violations committed by any other person operating under the authority of his or her permit. Additionally, any such other person is liable for his or her own violations.

(b) Seasonal Catch Limit. For the period from April 1 through March 31 of the following year, a total of not more than two million pounds of Tanner crab may be landed in California. For purposes of this catch limit, all landings of processed crab shall be converted to the whole-weight equivalent as described in subsection (a)(5)(B).

The directed trap fishery closure shall be implemented as follows:

(1) Mechanism for Fishery Closure. The department will estimate from the current trends in catch and using available scientific information the time at which the catch limit will be reached. The department will close the directed trap fishery at the time the catch limit is reached or is projected to be reached prior to the end of the fishing year.

(2) The department shall give holders of Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permits described in subsection (a) no less than 10 days notice of the closure via a notification letter sent to the permittee's address on file with the department. The department shall give the public and the commission no less than 10 days notice of the closure via a department news release.

(3) When the Tanner crab catch limit has been reached, Tanner crab may continue to be taken incidentally in other fisheries where a Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit is not required.

(c) Minimum Size Limit. Any species of Tanner crab must have a minimum carapace width of 5 inches measured by the greatest straight-line distance across the carapace at a right angle to a line midway between the eyes to the posterior margin, not including spines. Every person taking Tanner crabs shall carry a measuring device and any Tanner crab that is found to be undersized shall immediately be returned to the water.

(d) Male-Only Fishery. Only male Tanner crabs may be retained and landed. All female Tanner crabs shall immediately be returned to the water.

(e) Prohibition on Use as Bait. Tanner crabs may not be used as bait in any commercial fishery.

(f) Tidal Invertebrate Permits. Tidal Invertebrate Permits issued pursuant to Section 123, Title 14, CCR, are not required for the commercial take of Tanner crab.

NOTE

Authority cited: Sections 1050, 5508, 7090, and 8026, Fish and Game Code.
Reference: Sections 1050, 1052, 5508, 7050 et seq., 7850, 7881, 8026, 8031, 8040, 8041, 8042, 8043, 8046, 8051, 8834, 9000, 9001, 9002, 9003, 9004, 9005, 9006, 9007, 9008, and 9012, Fish and Game Code.

Section 180.2, Title 14, CCR is amended to read:

§180.2. Trap Destruction Devices.

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 9003 of the Fish and Game Code, every trap used to take fin fish, mollusks or crustaceans shall contain at least one destruction device that complies with the specifications described in this Section. ~~listed in subsections (a), (b) and (c) below.~~ The use of any structures or materials that defeat or interfere with the purpose of the destruct device is prohibited.

(a) ~~Each department approved~~ Escape openings.

(1) Each trap destruct device shall create an unobstructed escape opening in the top or upper half of the trap of at least 5 inches in diameter when the destruct attachment material corrodes or fails, except for traps used under authority of a Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit.

(2) Traps used under authority of a Tanner Crab Trap Vessel Permit shall have an unobstructed escape opening in any sidewall or on the top of the trap; the escape opening shall not be on the bottom of the trap. The opening shall measure not less than 11 inches taken at its smallest inside diameter. If the opening is non-rigid or contained within pliable mesh, the smallest inside diameter measurement shall be taken so that a rigid cylindrical measuring device 11 inches in its outside diameter and at least 6.5 inches in length shall be able to pass easily through the opening.

(b) The escape opening on each trap must be closed with one of the following ~~Department approved destruct attachment materials are limited to the following:~~

- (1) 14 gauge (.080 + or - .003 inch) or smaller metal hog rings excluding stainless steel or other non-corrodible materials;
- (2) untreated cotton twine size No. 21-thread or less, except that traps used to take Dungeness, Tanner or rock crabs are limited to a single strand of untreated cotton twine size No. 120 or less;
- (3) 24 gauge (.028 + or - .003 inch) or smaller uncoated bare metal crimps excluding stainless steel or other non-corrodible materials;
- (4) magnesium pins not larger than one-quarter (.25) inch in diameter which may be used to hold together each half of plastic or fiberglass traps or may be used to attach the lid or door; or
- (5) The use of rubber straps attached to metal or plastic hooks with a single loop of untreated cotton twine size No. 120 or less may be used to close the trap provided they are attached in such a manner as to aid the destruct process. The use of any rubber strap or non-corrosive material that defeats or interferes with the purpose of the destruct panel is prohibited.

(c) [Operative until July 16, 2006] Notwithstanding subsection (a) above, traps used to take Dungeness crabs, which are constructed of wire mesh, may have

up to three meshes (described as “V”s or a “W” and a “V”) that protrude into the destruct device opening provided that the points of each of these meshes are separated by at least one side (bar) of an adjoining mesh that has been removed and each of the meshes extend into the opening a distance of not more than 2 1/2 inches, as measured from the perimeter of the opening along either edge of the protruding wire mesh, to serve as an anchor for the destruct attachment material. On Dungeness crab traps constructed of wire mesh, the panel containing the destruct device and the wire mesh acting as an anchor for the destruct material must be constructed of a single wire no greater than .050 inches in diameter. This subsection shall become inoperative on July 16, 2006 and is repealed effective that date.

(c) [Operative July 16, 2006] Notwithstanding subsection (a) above, traps used to take Dungeness crabs, which are constructed of wire mesh, may have not more than a single wire mesh (described as a “V”) that protrudes into the destruct device opening provided that mesh extends into the opening a distance of not more than 2 1/2 inches, as measured from the perimeter of the opening along either edge of the protruding wire mesh, to serve as an anchor for the destruct attachment material. On Dungeness crab traps constructed of wire mesh, the panel containing the destruct device and the wire mesh acting as an anchor for the destruct material must be constructed of a single wire no greater than .050 inches in diameter. This subsection shall become operative on July 16, 2006.

NOTE

Authority cited: Sections 7090, 7708, 8500 and 9003, Fish and Game Code.

Reference: Sections 7090, 8500, 9003 and 9008, Fish and Game Code.